

EXHIBIT 34

**The Guardian article titled
“New York ends ban and
becomes 50th state to legalize
mixed martial arts”**

The Guardian



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**New York state assembly ends ban on professional MMA bouts
Law clears way for UFC to hold events at Madison Square Garden
Bill passes by 113-25 margin after clearing three prior committees**

Bryan Armen Graham *in New York*

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Mixed martial arts is illegal in New York no longer.

Lawmakers in the New York state assembly approved legislation on Tuesday that will allow MMA events to take place in New York, making it the 50th and final state to legalize and regulate the sport. The bill clears the path for the Ultimate Fighting Championship, the sport's leading promoter, to hold events at Madison Square Garden and other venues in the state.

The final floor vote was 113 to 25, having cleared three committees earlier in the day. The yes total well exceeded the 76 required for passage.

Now the bill heads to the desk of Governor Andrew Cuomo, who included MMA revenue in an executive budget proposal earlier this year and is widely expected it sign it into law.

Bill NoA02604 “establishes protocols for combative sports; authorizes mixed martial arts events in this state; establishes procedures for applications for licenses; establishes penalties for violations; imposes taxes on gross receipts of such events.”

The senate had passed a legalization bill in each of the last seven years, but it consistently stalled in the assembly due to the staunch opposition of former speaker Sheldon Silver, who was arrested on federal corruption charges in January.

New York first banned professional MMA bouts in 1997, when the sport was unregulated by state athletic commissions and before unified rules were implemented. It was the last remaining state in the union with a ban in place.

The New York state athletic commission will have 120 days to promulgate guidelines and regulations to govern the sport before the first event can be held, said assemblyman Joe Morelle, who sponsored the the legislation.

The bill was opposed by some of the assembly’s most prominent lawmakers, who raised concerns about the brutal nature of the sport and purported associations with domestic violence and homophobia.

“Two naked hot men rolling around on top of each other trying to dominate each other,” said Daniel J O’Donnell, a Democratic assemblyman from the Upper West Side who strongly opposed the bill. “That’s gay porn with a different ending.”

Assemblywoman Patricia Fahy, a Democrat from the Albany region who was also in opposition, cited health risks as her deciding factor: “I do believe we’re putting our short-term economic concerns ahead of what could be the long-term health of the athletes and the finances of the taxpayers, particularly as they relate to brain injuries.”

Added assemblywoman Deborah Glick, a Democrat from Lower Manhattan: “This is a sad day. If this is one of the most popular sports in the country, it says more about our society than it says about how edifying this particular activity may be.”

A number of assemblymen acknowledged that while they weren’t overly fond of MMA, they would will support it.

“I’m not a particular fan of MMA but I believe in freedom and opportunity,” said Steven F McLaughlin, a Republican from the Albany region. “There are a lot of people that enjoy this sport.”

Added Matthew Titone, a Democrat assemblyman who in 2007 became Staten Island’s first openly gay public official, and who voted in favor of the legislation: “If I wanted to see half-naked men fighting over a belt where the winner gets a purse, I’d go to Fire Island.”

“It is a terrible, nasty, violent sport,” said Michael Benedetto, a Democrat from the Bronx. “But it’s everywhere else. At least now we will be able to regulate (it).”

Amateur MMA fights had been permitted in New York but were not overseen by the state’s athletics commission. That body will now oversee the sanctioning of both amateur and professional MMA events.

The legislation includes a promoter-funded \$1m minimum insurance policy for fighters who sustain life-threatening brain injuries sustained in a fight within state lines.

“These provisions will make New York State a national leader as far as protecting fighters,” Morelle said.

The UFC expressed thanks to the state assembly on Twitter shortly after Tuesday’s vote.

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